

A CLINICO EPIDEMIOLOGICAL STUDY ON DERMATOSES IN PRETERM NEONATES

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Maturation of the skin starts at birth with the adaptation to the external environment. To deliver proper skin care it is necessary to know about the characteristics of neonate's skin and conditions arising from or involving it secondarily. The skin of the preterm neonate is immature, has weaker dermoepidermal attachment which place them at higher risk of systemic dissemination from cutaneous infections.

Aim: To determine the prevalence of various dermatoses and to detect association between sex, birth weight, gestational age, mode of delivery, consanguinity and dermatoses.

Method: A cross sectional study of 100 preterm neonates with cutaneous changes born during one year period was examined.

Results: 79% of the neonates had physiological changes, 15% had pathological conditions and 6% had both. Among the physiological conditions milia was the most common (77%) followed by epstein pearl (66%), mongolian spot (63%) and others. Pathological conditions were congenital anomalies (5%), ichthyotic disorders, nevi, etc. Lanugo hair, physiological icterus and epstein pearl were more frequent in neonates with ≤ 34 weeks of gestational age. No significant relationship was found between the mode of delivery, consanguinity, parity and any of the common dermatoses observed in our study.

Conclusion: Although skin changes are common in neonatal period, most of them are benign and transient thus requires no treatment. We should be aware of these dermatoses in order to distinguish them from serious conditions and to assuage parental anxiety.

Key words: preterm neonates, physiological changes, milia, epstein pearl, pathological conditions